

APRIL

Magic Lantern Society

NEWS 2025



Be Sure to LOOK for those Buttons and
roll-over effects

Click on Slide
to view a few slide
manufactures

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The Magic Lantern Calendar –April 2025

Events

Apr. 4, 2025, **International Conference on the Magic Lantern:** Study, Safeguard, Uses and Reuses, Abi Feijo is the author and operator of the reconstruction of the optical theatre and the lanternist introducing the movement mechanisms of his magic lantern slides in a show to close the conference presented by the Instituto de Historia da Arte, at the Chemical Amphitheatre of the National Museum of Natural History and Science, Rue da Escola Politecnica, 54-60, 1250-102, Lisbon, Portugal.

Apr. 5-6, 2025, **Spring meeting**, Magic Lantern Society (UK), includes guided tour of the Cinema Museum, a variety of talks and presentations, and a visit to the Teatre-Museu Dali in Figueres, Museu del Cinema, Girona, Catalunya, Spain.

Apr. 9, 2025, **Spiral Sanctuary Walk Workshop with the Art of the Magic Lantern**, an evening of archival and imaginal exploration among the surroundings of Woolwich Old Dockyards, Nicole Mollett and Frog Morris repurpose pre-cinema projection equipment to create new live performances, Clockhouse community Centre, Defiance Walk, Woolwich Dockyard, London SE18 5QL, England.

Apr. 13, 2025, **Views of Nature and Moving Images Before the Movies**, join magic lantern aficionado Joel Schlemowitz for a journey in the elemental images conjured through the pre-cinematic play of light and shadow, Cinemapolis, 120 E. Green St, Ithaca, NY 14850.

Apr. 19, 2025, **Journey from Tanger to Palestine in the 19 th Century**, Jerry Butler presents a biunial combined with a single to produce dissolving effects, accompanied with a live music performance, Cinema Rif, the cinematheque de Tanger, Q5MP+GQV Grand Socco, Pl. du 9 Avril 1947, Tangier 90030, Morocco.

Jun. 19 - 20, 2026, **Im Zauber Des Lichts, Bilderwelten der Latera Magica**, exhibition with shows of slides by Bottcher (19 th) and 18 th century slides and Bottcher's Soiree (20 th), Freilichtmuseum Hessenpark, Laubweg 5, 61267 Neu-Anspach, Germany.

Jul. 2 – 4, 2025, **The World at a Glance: Panoramic and Peep Technologies**, 34 th Conference of the International Panorama Council, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Portugal.

Jul. 17 – 31, 2025, **Harper Thursday and the Magic Lantern**, a theatrical adventure, this enchanting production invites families to embark on a journey filled with wonder and imagination. The Common Room, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1SE, England.

Jul. 19, 2025, **Summer meeting**, Magic Lantern Society (UK), Lacey Green Millennium Hall, Main Road, Lacey Green, HP27 0QN, Buckinghamshire, England.

Oct. 18, 2025, **Autumn meeting**, Magic Lantern Society (UK), Swedenborg Hall, 20-21 Bloomsbury Way, London WC1A 2TH, England.

Through 2025, **Project Space Residency**, featuring Melissa Ferrari, Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince Street, Rochester, NY 14607.

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Calendar –continued

Jan. 25, 2026, **2026 Annual General Meeting**, Magic Lantern Society (UK), Musical Museum, Brentford, London, England.

Sundays through Thursdays, **Salem on Foot: Magic Lantern Tour**, rare and strange images projected upon shadowy walls and darkened streets, bringing life to tales of ghosts and witchcraft and murder. Derby Square, Downtown Salem, MA.

Exhibits

Ongoing, **Te Manawa Magic Box**, hands-on learning for all ages, Te Puawananga Science and Technology Centre, Museum of Transport and Technology, 805 Great North Road & 98 Motions Road, Western Springs, Auckland 1022, New Zealand.

Through Aug. 17, 2025, **Words and Wonder: Rediscovering Children's Literature**, a rare look at juvenilia including magic lantern slides from Aesop's Fables, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, 300 West 21 st St., Austin, TX 78712.

Apr. 2025, **MiniCine**, a multimedia installation giving children the opportunity to playfully explore the world of moving images using devices such as the magic lantern, Taartrovers, Buiksloterdijk 398, 1034 ZH Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Through Dec. 28, 2026, **Im Zauber Des Lichts, Bilderwelten der Latera Magica**, an overview of children's slides production in Germany with examples from the beginnings in the 1780s to the 1930s, with children's lanterns from the same period, with their boxes, Freilichtmuseum Hessenpark, Laubweg 5, 61267 Neu-Anspach, Germany.

Through Dec. 29, 2025, **Im Zauber des Lichts – Bildwelten der Laterna Magica: Magic Lantern and Toy Lantern Slide exhibition**, Freilichtmuseum Hessenpark, Laubweg 5, 6126 Neu-Anspach/Taunus, Germany.

Online

Magic Lantern Research Group, Learn about, collaborate on academic research. Monthly on Zoom, 2 nd Thursday, 7:00 alternating with 2 nd Sunday, 4:00. Contact Terry Borton: tborton@magiclanternshows.com

Magic Lantern Performing Group, Improve your skills every other Wednesday on Zoom. Contact Terry Borton: tborton@magiclanternshows.com

Media History Digital Library, <https://mediahistoryproject.org/collections/magic-lantern/> Magic lantern ephemera.

De Luikerwaal Dutch Virtual Museum, <https://www.luikerwaal.com/> Magic lantern history, pictures, stories.

Lucerna – the Magic Lantern Web Resource, online database collaboration covering all aspects of magic lanterns. <http://lucerna.exeter.ac.uk/>

The Museum of American Magic Lantern Shows, 5-minute intro, 10-minute Highlights Tour, 30-minute In-Depth Tour and Kids' Page. www.magiclanternmuseum.com

To add your magic lantern show, exhibition, or other event to our calendar, or to list your show for potential bookings, drop a line to briandrogers@gmail.com.

“The Course of True Love Never Runs Smooth”: Lecture Please/Intermedial Tease

**From
Janelle Blankenship**

I bought this unmarked single rackwork slide (“The Course of True Love Never Runs Smooth”) at the convention in Cleveland. I believe a society member purchased it on ebay. It was advertised on ebay as a “True Love Story Spinning Magic Lantern Slide.” “Gipsy Fortune Teller” is the handwritten title [on the top right of the frame edge, the exhibitor’s initials? B.C. are also penciled in]. As the ebay seller noted, “when you turn the crank you bring nine different scenes into view, which act out the story.” The glass disc with story “scenes” revolves, while the center disc remains stationary. An opening text banner announces the rocky subject matter: “The Course of True Love Never Runs Smooth.” In a country setting, a fortune-teller points to a tale of true love that unfolds as nine embedded story-views or visionary inserts (similar to the “thought pictures” in melodramatic life-model slides or embedded visions seen in “A Soldier’s Dream” dissolving view sets [with a main slide and effect slides]). Like the wizard in the popular rackwork effect slide who points his wand at various apparitions that jump out of a black cauldron, the fortune-teller points her hand at the mechanical “effect,” the scenic views or revolving foretold “visions” that flash onto the screen.



The source material could be an 1857 romance “The Course of True Love Never Did Run Smooth” by British novelist and dramatist Charles Reade? The title is a nod to the famous line spoken by Lysander to Hermia in William Shakespeare’s “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.” {Several editions of the novel were illustrated by Helen Paterson, a Victorian watercolorist who studied at the Birmingham

School of Design.} “The Gypsy Fortune Teller” was also a popular pastime in 1860s tableaux vivant culture. In the tableaux vivant staging with two female performers, an older fortune-teller was costumed in a “bright crimson dress,” while the second

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“The Course of True Love Never Runs Smooth”: Lecture Please/Intermedial Tease continued

performer, a young lady, dons a straw hat “placed jauntingly to the side of the head.” Living picture performers were instructed to fill the background of the stage “with scenery representing a forest.” (James H. Head, “Home Pastimes or Tableaux Vivants”, 151-152). The rackwork slide colors and setting bear some similarities to the tableaux vivant costuming and staging. A stereopticon lecturer, parlor etiquette teacher and elocutionist from Maryland Mrs. Mary L. Gaddess also published a poem in 1894 entitled “Gipsy Fortune Teller” with tableaux vivant scenic arrangement instructions. This little-known lady of the lantern writes: “Is your sweetheart fond and true; Is your lover handsome, wise? Only wait and I will read/All your secrets in your eyes.”

As Debby and Terry Borton write in “Before the Movies”, British and American manufacturers sold a few (presumably) different sets with the title “Course of True Love Never Runs Smooth.” This is well-documented in optical trade lists and catalogues. The January 1875 issue of “The Magic Lantern Journal” briefly mentions a new “comic” set by J.E. Blue entitled “The Course of True Love Never Did Run Smooth,” boasting it ensured a “good commencement” to any show. (The MLJ reports that



Mr. J. E. Blue was the lantern artist who drew many of the sketches illustrating Mr. Wilson’s “Views Abroad and Across,” another example of the important links between British manufacturers and lanternists/artists affiliated with the Philadelphia scene). Around 1905 the Chicago-

based L. Manasse stereopticon company also marketed a similarly-titled set with lecture. In the art world, early cinema, Victorian print culture, and popular lantern culture one finds melodramatic life-model sets, stereographs

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“The Course of True Love Never Runs Smooth”: Lecture Please/Intermedial Tease continued

[also tissue views], romance postcards, an oil painting by Paul Seignac and a Mutoscope motion picture with the same (or similar) title.

The original ebay seller who listed the item noted they did not have a reading. The Lucerna Database and UK Society Readings Library do not have readings for this slide. I am wondering if any society members have seen this slide in a catalogue [maker, artist?] or have leads on similar sets or suitable readings?

As Jeremy Broker mentioned in an email, “The Course of True Love Never Runs Smooth” text could just be the representation of a well-known phrase, rather than a specific narrative. In that case, perhaps there was no formal reading. The lanternist could simply narrate what seemed appropriate, depending on the audience. If there is no formal reading, I can do a Mary Gaddess-tableaux-vivant-inspired Shakespearean/Readean mash-up!

Any ideas or leads would be greatly appreciated!

jblanke2@uwo.ca



Note: Letters/Symbols XX BA K ED Xenf, black masking

In Memory of UK magic lantern showman Doug Lear

From Ryan Shepard
ryanshepard@gmail.com

Hi David:

Thought this illustrated
appreciation of the late UK
magic lantern showman
Doug Lear might be of
interest to members: RIP
Doug Lear | DJ Food

Regards,
Ryan Shepard



Doug Lear, formerly one of the UK's
leading exponents of the Magic Lantern
(both in performance and collection)
passed away on March 6th.

<https://www.djfood.org/rip-doug-lear/>



A Facebook Site That Features Some of Our Lantern Slide Presenters and Magic Lantern Exhibit and Festival Past Show

[Home](#) » [Departments](#) » [Resource Conservation](#) » [Parks](#) » [Programs & Events](#) » [Magic Lantern Festival](#)

Magic Lantern Festival

Burlington County
New Jersey

Before there were movies, television and videos...there were Magic
Lanterns!



https://co.burlington.nj.us/2075/Magic-Lantern-Festival?fbclid=IwY2xjawJOxWdleHRuA2FibQlxMAABHYLWxykHsmoqAvpYTLcRkxEI6oATYHhODG78fk8aSTuHuBz4c1S4-KZfTA_aem_zjOtG80QWncGDv2shWC2zA



From Nancy Saylor
nancysaylor@earthlink.net

Hello,

I ran across your informative website.

We have discovered a collection of lantern and other glass slides in our late father's basement. Could you advise anyone to contact for preservation? There is a case of around 40 with various labels mostly TH McAllister; some labeled made in France. Two smaller boxes of "Hammer" plates maybe 6 plates in each another 30 loose plates and then another 60 or so small glass plates.

We believe this collection came from a friend of our father who was a university professor in Europe and US in the early-mid 20th century.

Any guidance you can offer on how to preserve these plates would be appreciated!

Kind regards,

Nancy Saylor
Columbus, Ohio

Thanks for your reply, David! We also thought there may be historical significance and would like to ensure they were conserved and shared with others whom may have an interest in them. We have no use for them but thought maybe your organization would be able to conserve/scan/share? If so, how best do I get them to you? We can ship them but if you are not too far away maybe we would take a trip and deliver them.

Many thanks for your response,
Amalia

About Collection Found in Columbus, Ohio

Thanks for your email David. Appreciate your help and will look forward to hearing from you in April.

From David Evans

Hello Nancy

When you mention preservation, do you mean conservation so that you can keep them safe for your family, or did you have in mind passing them on for others to conserve them? If you could kindly let me know what you have in mind it may be that one of our members, or possibly I, may be able to offer suitable advice. The collection may be of historical interest.

Thank you for contacting us.

David Evans

Hello Amalia

Thank you for your reply. The Society does not have a physical site or have a museum as such, though individual members do. We do have members in your region (Columbus, Ohio) and one of them may be able to help you. If you receive no suitable offers, as Correspondence Secretary I would be happy to look after them for you, but please wait until after the first day of April, when our next e-publication newsletter goes out, as it may be that a member closer to you may be able to help.

Regards

David Evans



From Catalogue of Stereopticons by TH McAllister





**Now is Time to
Make Plans**

**APRIL
23-26
2026**

**SAVE
THE
DATES**



TORONTO



**21ST INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION,
MAGIC LANTERN
SOCIETY OF THE US
AND CANADA**



Member Activity

Group NW of the Magic Lantern Society



Once again the Society Display Table
will be at the:

**Puget Sound Collectors
Camera Show
47th PSPCS Sale, Swap &
Photographica Show
April 5, 2025
at Kent Commons WA**
<https://www.pspcs.org/>

Our Society has had a presence at this
annual event since the beginning of the
Society with Joe Koch and Bob Bishop
hosting the table.

Upcoming Performances



Matt Schnittker

April:

April 12-13 - Tintypes at the Santa
Clarita Cowboy Festival, Newhall, Ca.

May:

May 15-18 - Tintypes, Telegraph and
Magic Lantern Shows at The Diggins
1852 at Columbia State Park

June:

June 6, 7, 8 - Tintypes, Telegraph and
Magic Lantern Shows at the Little
House On The Prairie 50 Year Cast
Reunion At Columbia State historic
Park

July:

July 19 & 20 - Tintypes at the Central
Coast Renaissance Festival, San Luis
Obispo Ca.



Books For Sale

Magic images the art of hand-painted and photographic lantern slides (London: Magic Lantern Society, 1990)



editors CROMPTON, Dennis,
HENRY, David,
HERBERT, Stephen
London: Magic Lantern Society
96 pages, hardback
8.3 inches, height x 11.4 inches)

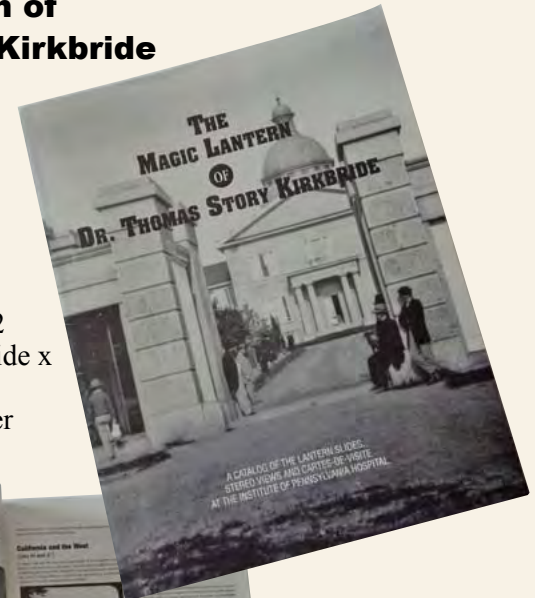
\$ 50
PLUS SHIPPING



The Magic Lantern of Dr. Thomas Stroy Kirkbride

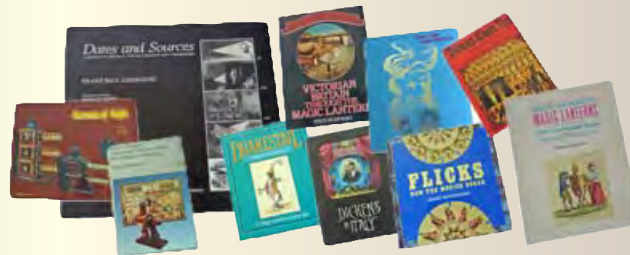
A catalog of the lantern
slides, stereo views and
cartes-de-visite at the
Institute of Pennsylvania
Hospital – January 1, 1992
by Frances Gage (Author)

Number Pages 142
Size 8½ inches wide x
11 inches high
Binding: Soft cover



\$ 5
PLUS SHIPPING

**Ask About Other
Magic Lantern
Books for Sale**



Contact
Larry Cederblom
designerlc@comcast.net



MAGIC LANTERN/ GLASS SLIDES

Public group · 187 members



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/907369726280154/media>

This is a site that has some quality slide images



Lantern Slides - Yosemite



<http://www.acpillsburyfoundation.org/Analysis---Lantern-Slides---Yosemite.html>

Lantern Slides, also called Magic Lantern Slides, have been in use longer than most people realize. The original “Laterna Magica” dates from the 17th century, and is an early type of image projector. Light is used to project the image onto a screen. With the advent of photography, the applications for this technology increased dramatically, resulting in slides used for lectures in science, travel, and a myriad of other purposes. Black and white photography quickly resulted in the use of ‘tinted’ slides. Tinted slides reproduced natural color, as seen in these examples.

Hand-colored b&w glass plate “magic lantern slides” of Yosemite
– A.C. Pillsbury, photographer

Establishing A.C. Pillsbury as the photographer of various hand-colored lantern slides (from the “Mildred Clemens Collection”) by comparison to Pillsbury photographic illustrations [especially Pillsbury photographs found in the book “YOSEMITE AND IT’S HIGH SIERRA” by John Williams (1914/1921 editions)]:



“OVERHANGING ROCK - WINTER”: front and back of lantern slide

A Big Thank You to the following:

Janelle Blankenship
David Evans
Brian Rogers
Nancy Saylor
Matt Schnittker
Ryan Shepard

for contributing
to this month's issue.



OCTOBER 24, 1908.

ADVERTISING SLIDES

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DON'T Go To Sleep

Use the HETZ. He is buying 10 rolls of lantern slides of him each week and renting 2 rolls every day for \$10.00 per week. Call and be convinced. Out of town customers name terms. No deposit. No security. We depend upon your honesty. 5,000 slides, too. Rightly used in clubs; all makes, at a sacrifice, as we need the room and must sell them before the holidays. Label whereof of any reading to get of town cartridges. Write for information.

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